

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 05316 050623Z

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01 /069 W

----- 021581

R 050545Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7950

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FOL MSG FM MEDAN SENT ACTION JAKARTA INFO SURABAYA ON
3 MAY BEING REPEATED TO YOU

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS ID

SUBJ: PROTEST BY BECAK DRIVERS IN MEDAN

1. MEDAN DAILY SINAR INDONESIA BARU (SIB) REPORTED ON MAY 2 THAT
ON PREVIOUS DAY ABOUT 50 BECAK DRIVERS APPEARED AT SIB OFFICE TO
COMPLAIN ABOUT RECENT CITY GOVERNMENT DECISION TO CREATE
BECAK-FREE ZONES IN CENTRAL CITY. PROTESTERS WERE LED BY TWO
BECAK DRIVERS WHO ACTED AS SPOKESMAN IN MEETING WITH SIB EDITORS.
ONE OF THESE SPOKESMEN WAS A RETIRED ARMY SERGEANT MAJOR, PAINO
HARDJOJO. HE MAINTAINED THAT THEY DO NOT OPPOSE THE CITY GOVERNMENT
BUT THEY FEEL A BETTER WAY SHOULD BE FOUND TO RELIEVE TRAFFIC
CONGESTION WITHOUT DEPRIVING BECAK DRIVERS OF THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

2. IN RELATED INCIDENT, HE LEARNED THAT A BECAK DRIVER STABBED
A POLICEMAN TO DEATH THIS WEEK AFTER HAVING BEEN STOPPED WHEN
TRYING TO ENTER ONE OF THE NEW BECAK-FREE ZONES. THE POLICEMAN
IS REPORTED TO HAVE DEMANDED MONEY FROM THE BECAK DRIVER WHO
STABBED HIM IN AN ENSUING STRUGGLE. THE NORTH SUMATRA LAKSUS HAS
INSTRUCTED THE LOCAL MEDIA NOT TO REPORT THIS INCIDENT.

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3. WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT THIS LATEST CITY EFFORT TO CONTROL BECAK OPERATIONS WILL STIMULATE A VIOLENT RESPONSE ALTHOUGH THERE COULD BE ADDITIONAL ISOLATED INCIDENTS. THE AUTHORITIES HAVE THE MEANS FOR CONTROLLING THE SITUATION, BUT THIS IS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE CAVALIER TREATMENT BY INSENSITIVE OFFICIALS OF A POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE GROUP. THE FACT THAT ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE PROTESTERS WAS A RETIEED ARMY NON-COM SHOULD GIVE ADDITIONAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT TO LOCAL OFFICIALS.

KILPATRICK UNQUOTE NEWSOM

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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